

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original) Item of footwear (1), in particular a motorcycle boot, comprising a rigid shell (4) which is produced from a first material and which defines a body which is intended to surround the foot of a user, the body having a lower portion (20) which forms a sole, an upper portion (22) which forms a vamp, an inner lateral portion (21) and an outer lateral portion (23), said lateral portions connecting the lower portion (20) and the upper portion (22), these four portions extending in an extension direction (6) between a first zone which forms a heel (8) and a second zone which forms a tip (10), said item having an opening (16, 18) defined in only one of the said four portions of the body, said opening extending through the rigid shell and being closed by means of a flexible pad (12, 14) which is produced from a second material, said second material being more flexible than the first.

2. (original) Item of footwear according to claim 1, characterised in that the opening (16, 18) is provided with spacing from the ends (24, 26) of the body in the extension direction.

3. (currently amended) Item of footwear according to either claim 1 or ~~claim 2~~, characterised in that the opening (16) is provided in a zone of the lower portion (20) which serves to support the sole of the foot of the user.

4. (original) Item of footwear according to claim 3, characterised in that the opening (16) extends transversely to the direction of extension (6) over less than half the width of the item of footwear.

5. (currently amended) Item of footwear according to claim 3 or claim 4, characterised in that the pad (12) extends in a recessed manner relative to the rigid shell (5).

6. (currently amended) Item of footwear according to any one of claim[[s]] 2 [[to 5]], characterised in that the opening (18) is provided in the upper portion (22).

7. (original) Item of footwear according to claim 6, characterised in that the opening (18) is provided substantially at the centre of the upper portion (22) relative to the extension direction.

8. (currently amended) Item of footwear according to any one of the preceding claim[[s]] 1, characterised in that the first material has a hardness which is at least 20% greater than the hardness of the second material.

9. (original) Item of footwear according to claim 8, characterised in that the pad (12, 14) has a hardness of between 60 and 80 Shore.

10. (currently amended) Item of footwear according to any one of the preceding claim[[s]] 1, characterised in that it comprises another rigid shell which defines an upper (4) which is intended for receiving the leg of the user and means (30) for articulating the upper relative to the body.

11. (new) Item of footwear according to claim 2, characterised in that the opening (16) is provided in a zone of the lower portion (20) which serves to support the sole of the foot of the user.

12. (new) Item of footwear according to claim 4, characterised in that the pad (12) extends in a recessed manner relative to the rigid shell (5).

13. (new) Item of footwear according to claim 3, characterised in that the opening (18) is provided in the upper portion (22).

14. (new) Item of footwear according to claim 4, characterised in that the opening (18) is provided in the upper portion (22).

15. (new) Item of footwear according to claim 5, characterised in that the opening (18) is provided in the upper portion (22).

16. (new) Item of footwear according to claim 2, characterised in that the first material has a hardness which is at least 20% greater than the hardness of the second material.

17. (new) Item of footwear according to claim 3, characterised in that the first material has a hardness which is at least 20% greater than the hardness of the second material.

18. (new) Item of footwear according to claim 4, characterised in that the first material has a hardness which is at least 20% greater than the hardness of the second material.

19. (new) Item of footwear according to claim 5, characterised in that the first material has a hardness which is at least 20% greater than the hardness of the second material.

20. (new) Item of footwear according to claim 6, characterised in that the first material has a hardness which is at least 20% greater than the hardness of the second material.